

Chris O'Brien

From: Arissa DiFillippo <arissa.difillippo@segueifl.org>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 1:24 PM
Subject: Arissa DiFillippo- Senate Bill S-13 and House Bill H-5193 - AGAINST

Hello Rhode Island Representative,

My name is Arissa DiFillippo. I am a registered voter and West Warwick resident.

I am a Elementary School Teacher at the Segue Institute for Learning, a charter school in Central Falls. The Segue Institute for Learning is a community-based charter school founded in 2006, serving students in grades 3-8 from the City of Central Falls. Our educational philosophy to increase the high school graduation, college-going, and college persistence rates for Rhode Island's low-income and first-generation students. Our school works diligently to provide a rigorous academic program with targeted intervention to ensure that all students are prepared for success. In addition to its strong academic programming, Segue engages families to be active participants in their child's education through an open classroom policy and extensive outreach to families.

I want to share statistics about our school.

- * Segue expected growth will be 40 students each year for the next three years (120 in total) making the student population 360 total in K-8.
- * Central Falls has no fiscal impact issues as all of its funding comes from the state anyway.
- * Central Falls community wants our school to include K, 1 and 2 as the response so far has been very positive.
- * CFSD is reporting an "overflow" of scholars in its rosters. Student enrollment increased last year and continues to rise.
- * Segue continues to work in collaboration with the CFSD and has written that collaboration in at least three grants/initiatives.
- * Segue has created a wide network of collaborators in the educational, business and community-based sectors.
- * Segue has been a 3 Star school since the classification system began.
- * Segue students performing on par with or higher than state averages in both ELA and Math in the last two rounds of assessments.

THE ISSUE:

Senate Bill S-13 and House Bill H-5193 would establish a three-year moratorium on the expansion of charter schools in Rhode Island. These bills would prevent the R.I. Council on Elementary and Secondary Education from approving any charter school expansion for three years and would block 5,800 recently approved seats from serving more students.

WHY OPPOSE THESE BILLS:

FAMILIES WANT PUBLIC SCHOOL OPTIONS:

Charter schools provide a high-quality, public school opportunities for Rhode Island families. Rhode Island families are demanding more opportunities to enroll their kids into our charter schools. In 2020, over 10,000 families applied to Rhode Island charter schools for only 1,900 available seats. We need more seats to meet the family demand.

FAMILIES OF COLOR DESERVE BETTER:

The vast majority of families seeking charter school opportunities are families of color from urban communities

(Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls). Rhode Island families of color demand high-quality, public school alternatives to under-performing district schools. THEY DON'T HAVE TIME TO WAIT!!

IT'S IRRESPONSIBLE TO BLOCK THE RECENT EXPANSIONS:

In December 2020, the R.I. Council of Education approved 4 new charter schools and expanded 4 existing charter schools, providing about 5,800 new charter school seats for Rhode Island families. S-13/H-5193 would prevent these expansions from opening this Fall.

SUPPORT SEGUE INSTITUTE and R.I. NURSES INSTITUTE MIDDLE COLLEGE

S-13/H5193 would prevent two League members charter schools from expanding. The Segue Institute for Learning in Central Falls was approved to expand by 120 seats to become a full K-8 school. The R.I. Nurses Institute Middle College (RINI) in Providence was approved to add 278 news seats. S13/H5193 would block these expansions.

FAMILIES ARE ALREADY ENROLLING STUDENTS:

Families have already begun enrolling students into these new seats for next year. They are already looking forward to having the opportunity of having their child attend a high-quality public school. It would be irresponsible to now deny them the opportunity.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. I hope this helps you understand the issue at hand.

Thank you.

-Arisa DiFillippo
4th Grade Teacher